



Town of Boone
Sustainability Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 9th, 2022
5:30 P.M.

Members Present: John Prickett, Terry Cirone, Benjamin Scarborough, Margie Mansure and Brian Crutchfield

Members Absent: Lee Ball, Joan Brook, Jeremy Love, Luanna Nesbit, and Danielle Stockman

Staff Present: George Santucci, Sustainability and Special Projects Manager and Laney Pilkington, Administrative Support Specialist/Communications

Council Liaison: Councilperson Becca Nenow

Others Present: Brandon Wise and Daniel Frick

Call To Order:

John Prickett called the meeting to order at 5:40pm.

Adoption of Agenda:

Prickett asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. Upon the motion made by Benjamin Scarboro, seconded by Terry Cirone, the agenda for the June 9th, 2022 Sustainability Committee was approved

Vote:

Yes: Prickett, Cirone, Scarboro, Mansure, Crutchfield

No: None

Absent: Ball, Brook, Love, Nesbit, Stockman

Approval of Minutes:

Prickett asked for a motion to approve the April 14th, 2022 Sustainability Committee Minutes. Upon the motion made by Cirone, seconded by Scarboro, the minutes for the April 14th, 2022 Sustainability Committee were approved.

Vote:

Yes: Prickett, Cirone, Scarboro, Mansure, Crutchfield

No: None

Absent: Ball, Brook, Love, Nesbit, Stockman

Old Business: Project Updates:

George Santucci began by discussing the visit to Watauga High School which Santucci and Laney Pilkington went to. At this visit, Santucci explained, they discussed the sustainable initiatives with two different classes, talked with the Sustainability Club through Watauga High School, took a tour and learned about the sustainable features built into the Watauga High School building, i.e. solar tubes, geothermal heating, etc., and learned more about the solar powered golf cart the shop class created. Santucci went on to say he was very impressed with the knowledge these students had, and was excited for the future the students they met with would bring. Scarboro asked who the shop class teacher was. Brandon Wise said his name was Erik Mortensen. Scarboro thanked Wise, Santucci then explained that the high school was working on installing a ground mount solar system near the greenhouse in order to provide energy to the greenhouse, and said that Boone would be willing to contribute if asked. Margie Mansure asked if the high school was LEED certified. Santucci said he believed it was LEED silver certified. With no further questions, Santucci went on to discuss the next item within project updates.

Santucci began by introducing the topic of the reusable bag program the Town of Boone had begun. Cirone added that she had gotten some information from the EPA regarding plastic, and that she said that 1% of the litter in landfills is plastic bags. However, she added that the data is far behind. Santucci agreed. Cirone then said that there were bans on plastic bags that may be revoked because they did not see a decrease in the amount of litter being produced. She went on to say that there's now a big push in the plastics industry to force all manufacturers to use a certain percentage of recycled plastic in the products they create, and that plastic bag bans are just a drop in the bucket in regards to litter issues, and that she believed that styrofoam was a bigger issue. Cirone added that educating the consumer is one of the most effective ways of reducing litter, in which Santucci agreed. Santucci added that litter is what the big issue is. Prickett then said that in reality, you can make a product that is more sustainable, but it would be more expensive and may not work as well. Santucci then asked Prickett if he had seen the Vio Foam cups that were being used by local restaurants. He said he had, but he added that there were still some chemicals and polymers remaining after they broke down. Santucci then said that there is value in the feel-good aspect to sustainability, which is why the Town was giving out reusable bags. Cirone and Prickett agreed. Santucci then went on to explain that the Town was giving out reusable bags at Be Natural, a health food store, with the goal to eventually create kiosks at bigger grocery stores and chains in order to reduce the amount of plastic bags used there. Discussion ensued regarding cash incentives for recycling glass bottles in different states. Santucci added that he learned more about a local composting program which takes food scraps from commercial areas and composts the scraps at their personal composting area. He then went on to say that there was a possibility for the Town to place trash cans in public parks and then the company would come and pick up the food scraps which the public would dispose of there. However, Santucci explained, there were kinks in which he would need to work out with both the company and the Public Works department. Margie Mansure then asked about the 'Green Business Product List', which was the next item on the agenda. Santucci said that this list would eventually be on the Town's website. Scarboro then asked if the recycling providers for the town recycle single-use plastic bags. Cirone said that there were drop-off locations at Harris Teeter and Publix. Wise said that as a Town employee, he was told that they do not recycle single-use plastic bags. Further discussion ensued regarding recycling. George

added that there is a group, Don't Waste Durham, which have expressed interest in coming to Boone and Watauga County. George gave a brief description of what was proposed. Similar to the previously mentioned composting drop-off areas, Don't Waste Watauga would provide drop off locations for reusable containers that participating restaurants would purchase, and then Don't Waste Watauga would sanitize the containers at a commercial facility, and then would redistribute the containers to the restaurants. The Committee expressed interest in the idea, however has some concerns regarding the returning of the containers. George agreed, and added that he would be meeting with Don't Waste Watauga the following week to learn more. George then asked if the Committee would be willing to pursue the option of placing Don't Waste Watauga drop off bins on Town property. Margie felt they needed more information. John agreed, and added that it did sound like a good idea. With no further discussion, George moved to the item within project updates.

George introduced the Boone Green Business list, also known as the Green Business Product List. He listed the partners of this list as the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, App State School of Business, and App State's New River Light and Power. Multiple other stakeholders attend the meeting as well. He went through the list, and added that the list will be added to the sustainability page of the Town of Boone's website soon. George then mentioned the Town of Boone's Toilet Rebate program, as well as other Every Drop Counts resources the town provides to citizens of Boone, free of charge. Margie asked what the Boone Green Business list was for, and if we were going to give it to businesses. George said it's meant to be a resource for businesses, and could possibly transform into a business certification program through the Boone Chamber of Commerce. Margie asked how each item would be "weighted" for the business certification program, and added that it would take time to figure out the right scale. George agreed, and mentioned that this list also includes items that aren't "traditionally sustainable", such as the social aspect of liveable wages. Terry mentioned that she personally didn't see the "social" aspect of the Green Business list as "green", especially because it felt "touchy-feeling". She added that seeing that as a business owner could make business owners wary, especially if they couldn't score in that category. George said that this potential certification didn't necessarily mean that all businesses would have to score in each category, however it is necessary to have "Social" on the list because it is a part of sustainability. Ben agreed. Terry then asked if the list could be renamed the "Boone Sustainable Business" list. The Committee agreed. With no further questions, George moved onto the next agenda item.

New Business:

John asked if George could present the results of the "Boone Community Climate opinion survey". George introduced the "Boone Community Climate Opinion Survey Results" to the Committee. He said that they had received 327 results. He showed the broad data of the survey, and all the answers to the questions of the survey. He added that they would use this data to learn more about the "pulse" of Boone, and what their opinions were before embarking on the Community Climate Action planning process. He added that the two smallest groups of respondents were the 18-24 year olds and 65+ year olds, and added that it could have been due to the timing and the format of the survey. After giving a brief overview of the data, George asked if there were any more comments. Ben said that AppalCART is such a great example of an excellent public transit system, and said that he'd love to see AppalCART grow, especially in regards to the 15 minute commuters to Boone. By giving people more access to public transit, the carbon emissions in Town would decrease. George and the Committee agreed. Ben said

he'd like the Town to pursue more park-and-ride opportunities. George and the Committee agreed. With no further questions, John moved to the next item of the new business section.

Brian Crutchfield left the meeting at 7:15pm.

John asked George to explain the 2021 Budget Review agenda item. George agreed, then gave a brief overview of the 2021 Budget for Sustainability and Special Projects. He noted that during 2021, the budget was \$144,000. If the FY 2022/2023 Budget for the Town of Boone is passed, then the line item would grow to \$150,000. He went on to explain that the 2021 Budget Review was just a way to show the Committee where the money went, which included electric vehicle charging infrastructure, purchasing LED streetlights. George also stated he would send the Committee a more detailed list of expenditures soon. George mentioned that he spoke with the County and they said they were interested in installing electric vehicle charging stations on their County-owned land in partnership with the Town, however it was still up in the air. After further discussion regarding possible locations for electric vehicle charging stations, John moved to the final item of the new business section.

George explained that on June 25th, the Town of Boone would be hosting a tree planting event at the Bolick Property. He said that he and Laney would email the Committee with more information soon. George thanked Margie for participating in the previous tree planting event, and encouraged the Committee to come out and volunteer. With no further comments, John moved to the next agenda item.

Other Matters:

John asked the Committee members if they had any other matters they needed to discuss. Margie asked how long term appointment dates were. George said they were 3 year terms. Margie thanked George for the information. With no further comments, John moved to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment:

Prickett asked for a motion to adjourn the June 9th, 2022 Sustainability Committee. Upon the motion made by Benjamin Scarboro, seconded by Terry Cirone, the June 9th, 2022 Sustainability Committee was adjourned at 7:48pm.

Vote:

Yes: Prickett, Cirone, Scarboro, Mansure, Crutchfield

No: None

Absent: Ball, Brook, Love, Nesbit, Stockman